278 [563] The Chinese druggists, many of whom stocked among their traditional pharmacopeia a few modern medications, gave out occasionally to their customers information derived from the manufacturer's instructions for use. People with minor indispositions sometimes sought a druggist's advice. He suggested traditional or modern remedies, depending on the wishes of the customer. Thus, the druggists also acted as a bridge to the use of modern remedies.

484 Facets of Social Life Pertinent to Childbearing:

Communication and Transportation

People went to Minburī, and less often to Bangkok, to buy, sell, work, or visit relatives. A few adults had never been outside Bang Chan.

494 [484] Along the road buses passed Bang Chan every two or three hours during the daytime only. Minburī was a ten minute ride, Bangkok, an hour. Minburī had no taxis, and no telephone existed to call a taxi from Bangkok. Two or three persons [206] owned bicycles. [493]

505 484 Within Bang Chan, transportation varied with the season. From June to February travel was entirely by boat, even to a neighbor. A message to a local midwife, for instance, could be carried quickly by a speedy paddler in his skiff. If an emergency trip to the Minburī Health Center appeared necessary, a person could be rowed fairly comfortably along the canal that bordered the road. Going by boat to Bangkok, a whole day's row away, or four hours by the motor boat from Minburī, was not considered convenient even for passenger traffic, much less for a sick person or a woman in labor.

484 844 [494] The inconvenient time of year was the three month dry season. Boats then could hardly go on the canal that ran through the middle of Bang Chan, while the smaller canals became muddy or even dry. Walking barefoot over sharp stubble in tropical sun was hard. To transport a woman in labor, assuming she could stand it, an improvised stretcher could be made, but to subject her to the jolting bus was usually foolhardy. It was not customary to flag down passing cars. If things went wrong for a woman in labor during the hot, dry season, there was practically no chance of getting her to a hospital, and none of getting modern help to her.

243 433 Work Habits in the Economy

Because of the annual flood the land was admirably suited to growing a single bounteous crop of rice. After all needs for